

UNIVERSITY WOMEN HELPING AFGHAN WOMEN

Ideas for Action to Support Afghan Women and Girls Education

The 2013 IFUW Workshop in Istanbul and our own October UWHAW meeting generated “Ideas for Action” to support Afghan women and girls education. Many of the ideas may be organized under four main headings: Awareness, Advocacy, Personal Support and Financial Assistance followed by suggestions of practical and doable ideas that clubs or individuals may actually implement. *Asterisks indicate projects in which UWHAW or members continue to be involved.

1. Awareness

To raise awareness and increase knowledge, one may:

- Promote upcoming lectures, presentations, workshops and/or provide follow-up information about such events*
- Arrange for presentations on a variety of related topics*
- Prepare fact sheet(s) to share with members and the public at large*
- Share and update reading lists and websites*
- Maintain a social media site*
- Prepare and present book and article reviews*
- Link with associate groups, e.g. Canadian Women For Afghan Women (CW4AW), Alliance Supporting Afghan People (ASAP)*
- Learn about NFAs, NGOs, Government organizations (including military) and other groups associated with Afghanistan, their mandates, involvement and current projects/proposals*
- Subscribe to an electronic list such as The Network for Afghan Women info@nawlist.org and share with friends and family on occasion*
One may identify needs of Afghan women and girls by participating in the above activities.

2. Advocacy

To advocate on behalf of Afghan women and girls, one may:

- Promote success stories to overcome cynicism*
- Share personal stories of Afghan women and girls*
- Provide best practice reports
- Prepare a resource package*
- Explain how UWHAW came to support girls in Afghanistan – a case study*
- Prepare and make presentations to local, national and international groups*
- Network with associated organizations*, e.g. CW4AW, ASAP, etc.
- Establish links to promote advocacy
- Organize media monitoring, a letter and email writing team*
- Lobby governments*
- Work with government groups and NGOs in Canada and Afghanistan*

- Ascertain how professional and other organizations may help, e.g. teachers (RTO), nurses, universities/colleges, service groups, etc..
- Support 2013 IFUW Resolution in Istanbul through CFUW–Ottawa/Canada & IFUW project*
- Learn about and promote appropriate UN/UNESCO observances through a special event/programme.
One may address needs of Afghan women and girls by participating in the above activities.

3. Personal Support

To comfort, encourage and support Afghan women and girls, one may:

- Network, while sensitive to cultural issues, with Afghan women and girls in Canada and Afghanistan on a personal basis*
- Participate in twinning programmes
- Invite Afghan women to local events, e.g. potluck meal, seasonal event, meetings, etc.
- Assist with English as a Second Language instruction
- Encourage Afghans to share their experiences and tell their stories*
- Help immigrants, visiting students and professionals settle into life in Canada*
- Provide support and incentives to all family members to encourage literacy and education

One may assist Afghan women and girls by being a friend while participating in the above activities.

4. Financial Assistance

To help financially, one may:

- Assist with funding of school buildings, scholarships, teachers' salaries, school uniforms, supplies, resources, libraries, instruments, etc.*
- Assist with teacher training, teacher and administrator exchanges
- Provide financial assistance to families
- Organize fundraising activities*
- Seek donors, e.g. Alma Maters, corporate/business sponsorship
- Seek secure and economical means of sending funds and transporting goods
- Create a newsletter to provide feedback and updated information about consequences of donations and actions/projects

One may help realize the potential and dreams of Afghan women and girls by aiding in the above activities.